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Wilson, Larry David. 1990. *Tantilla capistrata.*

Tantilla capistrata Cope

Tantilla capistrata Cope, 1875(1876):181. Type-locality, "Valley of Jequetepeque, [Depto. La Libertad,] Peru." Holotype, Acad. Natur. Sci. Philadelphia 11581, juvenile female, collected by James Orton, date of collection unknown (examined by author).

Homalocranium melanocephalum: Boulenger, 1896:215 (part).

Tantilla melanocephala: Dunn, 1923:186.

Tantilla melanocephala capistrata: Schmidt and Walker, 1943:318.

• **Content.** No subspecies are recognized.

• **Definition.** A species of *Tantilla* with a narow, diffuse dark middorsal stripe confined to the middorsal scale row (if present) and no pale lateral striipe. The dorsal ground color is tan. The venter is immaculate cream. The head pattern consists of "a pale brown to dark brown head cap separated from a dark brown nape band by a well-defined complete or medially divided pale nuchal band. There is an extensive pale marking on the snout coverning all the internasals and the anterior one-half to three-quarters of the prefrontals" (Wilson and Mena, 1980). Ventrals and subcaudals range from 130 to 156 and 46 to 71, respectively.

• **Diagnosis.** *Tantilla capistrata* may be distinguished from all congeners by possession of a narrow, diffuse dark middorsal stripe confined to the middorsal scale row (if present), no pale lateral stripe, a tan dorsal ground color, a head pattern of a well-defined complete or middorsally divided pale nuchal band followed by a 2 1/2-5 scale long dark nape band, a prominent pale marking on the snout, 130 to 156 ventrals, and 46 to 71 subcaudals.

• **Descriptions.** Descriptions of small samples are in Dunn (1923) and Schmidt and Walker (1943). The most complete description is in Wilson and Mena (1980).

• **Illustrations.** Wilson and Mena (1980) provided pen-and-ink drawings of laeral, dorsal, and ventral views of the head and anterior body, as well as of the dorsal body pattern.

• **Distribution.** *Tantilla capistrata* occurs "from near sea level to moderate elevations [ca. 0-900 m] of northwestern coastal Perú and the valleys of the upper Río Marañon, Río Chinchipe, and Río Chamaya" (Wilson and Mena, 1980).

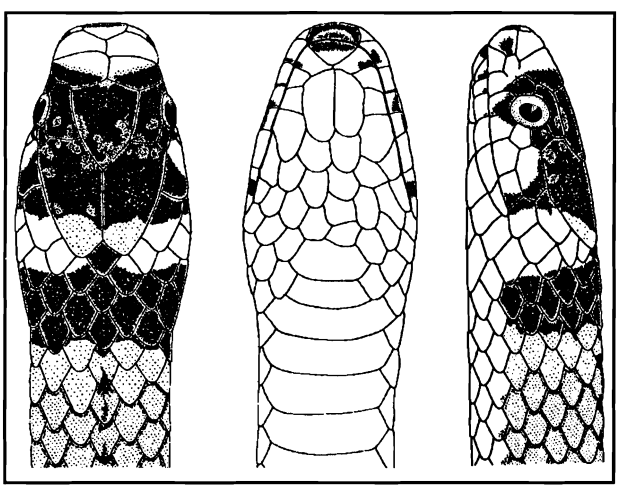
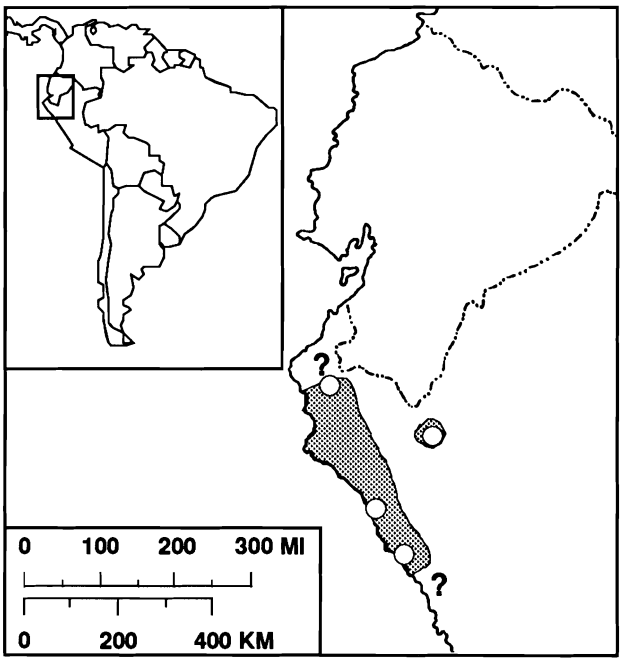


Figure. Head of *Tantilla capistrata* (from Wilson and Mena, 1980).



Map. Hollow circles indicate known localities. The type-locality is too indeterminate to plot.

• **Fossil Record.** None.

• **Pertinent Literature.** The meager literature on this species deals primarily with systematics (see Descriptions section). Wilson and Mena (1980) provided a description of the snake, discussed distribution, and postulated relationsips with the other members of the *Tantilla melanocephala* group.

• **Etymology.** The name *capistrata* is derived from the Latin *capistrum,* meaning "a halter, nosepiece, or muzzle," in presumed reference to the prominent pale marking on the snout of this species.

Literature Cited

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